

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1821

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

ALL CONSULATES GENERAL IN CANADA

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STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, CA, JA, UK

SUBJ: CIVAIR: IS A JAPAN-UK-CANADA TRIANGLE STRUGGLING TO BE BORN?

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. A SENIOR MOT OFFICIAL IS CONCERNED THAT THE U.K. AND JAPAN MAY BE SEEKING TO INVOLVE CANADA IN THEIR AVIATION DISPUTES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND BELIEVES AN INFORMAL, PRIVATE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND CANADIAN OFFICIALS WOULD BE USEFUL. EMBASSY REQUESTS WASHINGTON'S REACTION AND SUGGESTS THAT AS AN INTERIM MEASURE TCO BRIEF GOC ON U.K. AND JAPANESE AVIATION PROBLEMS FROM USG VIEWPOINT. END SUMMARY.

2. A SENIOR MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT (MOT) OFFICIAL-FOLLOWING PRESS AND OTHER REPORTS OF U.S. AVIATION DIFFERENCES WITH JAPAN AND BRITAIN (IN PARTICULAR, AVIATION WEEK AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY'S NOVEMBER 8 ARTICLE SUGGESTING COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TWO OFFSHORE ISLAND NATIONS IN RELATION TO THE UNITED STATES)--HAS SUGGESTED TO TCO THAT BOTH COUNTRIES MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO INVOLVE CANADA IN THEIR STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH THE UNITED STATES. THIS
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HE FINDS DISTURBING AND POSSIBLY DISRUPTIVE OF GOOD

U.S.-CANADIAN AVIATION RELATIONS. HE BELIEVES A VERY INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND CANADA MIGHT BE USEFUL IF IT COULD BE ARRANGED VERY PRIVATELY--PERHAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOME OTHER MEETING--SO THAT WORD, AND SUSPICION, OF U.S.-CANADIAN DISCUSSION WOULD NOT GET TO THE U.K. AND JAPAN.

3. AS EVIDENCE TO UNDERLINE HIS SUSPICION THIS OFFICIAL HAS CITED THE FOLLOWING:

(A) CANADIAN-JAPANESE AIR RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS HAVE BEEN TESTY AS THE GOC HAS PUSHED GREATER CAPACITY FOR CP AIR'S VANCOUVER-TOKYO ROUTE AGAINST CONTINUED GOJ RESISTANCE. (THIS ISSUE IS DISTINCT FROM, AND TO GOC MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN, FIFTH FREEDOM RESTRICTIONS ON CP AIR'S TOKYO-HONG KONG SERVICE WHICH TRUDEAU, WE ARE TOLD, HAD IN MIND WHEN HE RAISED THE BILATERAL WITH MIKI IN OCTOBER (TOKYO 162671, PARA 8). CONVERSELY, JAPAN HAS NOT FOR SEVERAL YEARS PUSHED FOR EXPANSION OF ITS SERVICES TO CANADA BEYOND VANCOUVER. ARRANGEMENTS CONCLUDED IN THE PAST YEAR OR SO GIVING CP AIR THE RIGHT TO FOUR (305-SEAT) B-747 WEEKLY FREQUENCIES, SEVEN MONTHS PER YEAR, ARE ALREADY INADEQUATE AND THE GOC IS BACKING CP AIR'S DEMAND FOR MORE. TO DATE, THERE HAS BEEN NO SUCCESS IN THIS ENDEAVOUR, BUT JAPANESE/CANADIAN MEETING IS EXPECTED LATE IN JANUARY FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

DURING PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S RECENT VISIT TO TOKYO THE GOJ ABRUPTLY PROPOSED THE ADDITION OF THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH TO THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE:

QUOTE. THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS AGREED TO EXPAND HEALTHY AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL CIVIL AVIATION RELATIONS, WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE FURTHER PROMOTION OF THE INTERFLOW BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLES, AS WELL AS TO ECONOMIC INTERCHANGE, THEREBY CONTRIBUTING TO THE OVERALL FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN CANADA AND JAPAN. UNQUOTE.

THIS POINT HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL, BUT WAS ACCEPTED BY THE TRUDEAU PARTY AS A POSITIVE SIGN, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF WHICH COULD BE LIFT TO OFFICIALS. OUR SOURCE STATED THIS GOJ INITIATIVE WAS COMPLETELY AT VARIANCE WITH THE SITUATION A FEW YEARS PREVIOUSLY WHEN THEN PRIME MINISTER TANAKA VISITED OTTAWA. CP AIR FREQUENCIES WERE FULLY DISCUSSED, AND THE GOJ RESISTED SUCCESSFULLY ALL EFFORTS TO INCLUDE AVIATION IN THE COMMUNIQUE.

(B) OTTAWA HAS HAD IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS A FEW QUIET AND APPARENTLY CASUAL VISITS FROM UPPER-LEVEL U.K. CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIALS (NAMES NOT SPECIFIED) WHO HAVE CONSISTENTLY BUT INFORMALLY SUGGESTED THE DESIRABILITY OF REVIEWING THE CANADA-U.K. AVIATION AGREEMENT AND THE AIR CANADA-BRITISH AIRWAYS POOL ARRANGEMENT WITHOUT, HOWEVER, SPELLING OUT WHERE REVISION MIGHT BE DESIRABLE. THE GOC SEES NO NEED TO REVIEW THE AGREEMENT AND AIR CANADA IS VERY PLEASED WITH THE POOL ARRANGEMENTS. OUR SOURCE SUSPECTS THE U.K. WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE SOME BETTER INTEGRATION BETWEEN NORTH ATLANTIC AND TRANS-BORDER SERVICES, PERHAPS HOLDING OUT THE BAIT OF THROUGH FLIGHTS BY AIR CANADA FROM U.S. POINTS TO ENGLAND, WITHOUT REGARD TO THE U.S.- CANADIAN BILATERAL, AS WELL AS BY IMPROVED AIRPORT CONNECTION ARRANGEMENTS FOR BA FLIGHTS WITH AIR CANADA TRANS-BORDER SERVICES. NO ARRANGEMENTS FOR A FORMAL DISCUSSION HAVE BEEN MADE.

4. THIS OFFICIAL READILY ADMITS TO THE POSSIBILITY HE IS CONJECTURING WITHOUT AN ADEQUATE BASE IN REALITY, BUT HE IS IMPRESSED BY THE SUDDEN ATTENTION CANADA IS GETTING FROM BOTH THE U.K. AND JAPAN. HE CAN THINK EASILY OF NO EXPLANATION OTHER THAN THE POSSIBILITY THAT BOTH ARE ATTEMPTING TO LAY THE GROUND WORK FOR ATTEMPTS TO WORK OUT THEIR FRUSTRATIONS WITH THE U.S. VIA CANADA. THUS HE FEELS AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION AT THE RIGHT LEVEL WITH THE USG WOULD BE DESIRABLE, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZES THAT THE TRANSITION PERIOD IN WASHINGTON MAY POSE ITS OWN PROBLEMS. TCO UNDERTOOK TO RELAY THE SUGGESTION. OUR SOURCE REQUESTED IT NOT REPEAT NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH EXTAFF OR CANADIAN EMBASSIES.

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5. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO POSSIBLE IMPROVED AIR SERVICE INTEGRATION, WE ARE WONDERING IF,SHOULD THIS MOT OFFICIAL'S SURMISES BE CORRECT, THE U.K. MIGHT BE THINKING OF SUGGESTING NEW POOLING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN AIR CANADA AND BA WHEREBY LATTER WOULD GET CONTINUED ACCESS TO U.S. TRAFFIC IN EVENT OF CAB RESTRICTIONS WHEN THE BILATERAL EXPIRES IN MAY. AIR CANADA, IN TURN, MIGHT GET IMPROVED REVENUE FROM THE POOL WHICH SHOULD BE ATTRACTIVE GIVEN ITS CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION.

6. RECOMMENDATION: PRESS COVERAGE AND OTHER REPORTS AVAILABLE TO THE CANADIANS ON U.S. AND JANPANESE PROBLEMS ARE PROBABLY INADEQUATE FROM USG VIEWPOINT. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR TCO PROMPTLY TO BRIEF THIS MOT OFFICIAL (AND HIS EXTAFF COUNTERPARTS) MORE

FULLY ON OUR CONCERNS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES SO THAT GOC
IS FULLY INFORMED ABOUT USG VIEWS BEFORE IT UNDERTAKES
ANY FURTHER AVIATION DISCUSSIONS WITH HMG AND GOJ.
REQUEST GUIDANCE.

7. MOT OFFICIAL'S SUGGESTION FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
BETWEEN OFFICIALS FROM OTTAWA AND WASHINGTON SEEMS TO
EMBASSY TO HAVE MERIT. IF DEPARTMENT AGREES, EMBASSY
SUGGESTS THAT TCO BE AUTHORIZED TO PROPOSE SUCH A
MEETING TO BOTH MOT AND EXTAFF WHEN HE GIVES
BRIEFINGS. IF, FOR SOME REASON, WASHINGTON
AGENCIES ARE NOT NOW KEEN ABOUT IDEA, REQUEST TCO
BE AUTHORIZED TO ADVISE MOT SOURCE--INDICATING WHY
NOT. ALTHOUGH SUGGESTION WAS PUT FORWARD ON INFORMAL
AND APPARENTLY PERSONAL BASIS, WE WOULD NOT WANT TO BE IN
POSITION OF IGNORING OFFER OF ADVANCE CONSULTATIONS.

8. SINCE GOC OFFICIALS MAY BE DIFFICULT TO CONTACT DURING
CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY PERIOD, EMBASSY REQUESTS
DEPARTMENT'S REACTION BEFORE THAT TIME IF POSSIBLE.
ENDERS

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